

Amendments to the Specification

1. Please replace the Abstract of the Disclosure with the following amended Abstract:

Methods and system for automatic identification of repeating patterns of slanted stripe features (marks) on an item. ~~In the initial step of the method of this invention embodiment of the method of this invention a digital image of the item is acquired. Pixel data is then obtained for pixels in the digital image. Line segment data is extracted from the pixel data. A set of collinear line segments is identified from the line segment data. A set of lines intersecting members of the set of collinear line segments is identified from the line segment data. The set of intersecting lines and the set of collinear lines identify a set of marks. In one embodiment of the method of this invention, in identifying the set of collinear line segments, the method also includes constructing a histogram displaying a number of line segments in predetermined angular ranges. Systems of this invention implement the method.~~

2. Please replace paragraph [0021] of the specification with the following amended paragraph:

[0021] A flowchart of an embodiment of the method 40 of this invention is shown in Figure 1. Referring to Fig. 1, the first step in the method is the acquisition of a digital image (step 20, Fig. 1). Pixel data is obtained for each pixel in the image (step 30, Fig. 1). Line segment data is then obtained from the pixel data (step 40, Fig. 1) by conventional means. A number of conventional methods have can be utilized for obtaining line segment data from the pixel data. Some examples of methods that can be utilized for obtaining line segment data from the pixel data are, but not limited to, the line finder algorithm of Khan, Kitchen and Riseman (Kahn, P., Kitchen, L., and Riseman, E. M. *A fast line finder for vision-guided robot navigation*. IEEE Transactions on Pattern Analysis and Machine Intelligence 12, 3 (1990), 1098-1102) and the line extractor of Aste, Boninsegna and Caprile (M. Aste, M. Boninsegna, and B. Caprile. *A Fast Straight Line Extractor for VisionGuided Robot Navigation*, Technical report, Istituto per la Ricerca Scientifica e Tecnologica, 1994 available at <http://citeseer.nj.nec.com/aste93fast.html>).